NOT FOR PUBLICATION

B A L D O C K U R B A N D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L

To The Chairman and Members of the Baldock Urban District Council:

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Twenty-Fourth Report on the health and sanitary conditions of your district, as required by the Ministry of Health under the Sanitary Officers' Orders.

The Report covers the period from the 1st January, 1939, to the 31st December, 1943.

The Report is considerably curtailed, in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health, but full records have been made for the years, and it is hoped to present these when circumstances are more favourable.

SECTION A:

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

The Area of the district is 542 acres.

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Residential Population	4250	5133	5693	5352	5375
Number of inhabited houses	1166	1174	1178	1178	1178
Rateable value	£ 26,478	26,844	26,823	27,442	28,016
Sum represented by a penny rate	£102.17.2	104.13.11	106.2.8	109.9.5	112.14.10

Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Births:					
Legitimate, Male	38	31	43	42	51
" Female	42	49	41	44	36
Illegitimate, Male	2	3	3	2	4
" Female	1	1	3	4	4
TOTAL	83	84	90	92	95
Birth Rate	19·3	16·4	16·0	17·2	17·7
England and Wales	15·0	14·6	14·2	15·8	16·5
Still Births:					
Legitimate, Male	1	1	2	-	-
" Female	-	2	-	-	2
Illegitimate, Male	-	1	-	-	-
" Female	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	1	4	2	-	2
Still Birth Rate per thousand live births	12·0	47·5	22·0	-	21·0
Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:					
Legitimate, Male	3	3	2	3	4
" Female	5	1	3	3	1
Illegitimate, Male	-	-	-	-	-
" Female	-	-	1	1	-
TOTAL	8	4	6	7	5
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000 births)	96	43	66	76	52

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Deaths:					
Male	26	26	29	19	23
Female	28	19	32	23	27
	54	45	61	42	50
Death Rate	12·7	8·8	10·7	7·8	9·1
England and Wales	12·1	14·3	12·9	11·6	12·1

The chief causes of death were as follows:

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Whooping Cough	1	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis of Resp. Sys.	3	1	-	1	1
" other forms	1	1	1	1	-
Syphilitic Diseases	1	-	2	-	1
Influenza	-	-	1	-	1
Cancer	14	9	4	4	6
Cerebral Haemorrhage	3	-	-	2	-
Intra Cran. Lesions	-	2	5	1	10
Heart Disease	7	7	10	9	6
Other diseases of Circ. Sys.	8	1	5	4	4
Bronchitis	3	4	5	5	2
Pneumonia	1	2	1	2	1
Other Respiratory diseases	1	-	2	-	1
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	1	1	-	-	1
Diarrhoea (Under 2)	-	-	-	1	-
Appendicitis	-	-	-	1	1
Other Digestive diseases	-	4	2	-	2
Nephritis	-	1	2	-	3
Puerperal or post-abortive sepsis	2	1	-	-	-
Premature Birth	5	1	1	2	2
Con. Mal. Birth	-	1	5	3	2
Suicide	2	-	1	-	-
Road Traffic Accident	-	-	1	-	-
Other Violent causes	-	2	2	1	1
All other causes	1	7	11	5	5
Death from Cancer (all ages)	14	9	4	4	6
Rate per thousand population	3·3	1·7	0·9	0·9	1·1

Deaths shown in Age Groups:

	1939		1940		1941		1942		1943		TOTAL
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
0 - 10 years	3	5	4	1	2	4	3	6	3	1	32
10 - 20 "	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	5
20 - 30 "	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	5
30 - 40 "	-	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	2	-	6
40 - 50 "	1	3	1	1	4	1	-	1	3	-	15
50 - 60 "	6	4	6	4	3	3	1	-	5	1	33
60 - 70 "	4	7	8	4	7	1	6	3	3	7	50
70 - 80 "	6	3	7	4	7	13	4	5	3	7	59
80 - 90 "	4	3	-	2	4	5	4	7	3	8	40
90 -100 "	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	3	6

The Birth Rate is considerably higher than England and Wales, whilst the Death Rate is considerably lower except for the year 1939, when a large number of deaths were due to Cancer.

It is interesting to note the small number of deaths up to the 50 age group, except for the Infant Mortality Rate, which is higher than England and Wales.

SECTION B:

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

(i) STAFF

Medical Officer of Health (part-time):
Bertram Suggit, M.B., Ch.B.(Leeds and Manchester)
D.P.H. (Cambs.)
Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector:
Leslie R. Brown, M.R. San. I., A.F.A.S.

The work of the Department has been rather difficult owing to the numerous other duties which have had to be carried out during this period.

(ii) OTHER SERVICES

(a) Laboratory Facilities. The examination of swabs and milk samples was undertaken by the Ministry of Health Emergency Laboratories.

(b) Ambulance Facilities.
(1) For Infectious cases. Available from Fever Hospital.
(2) For Non-infectious and accident cases. Agreement with Letchworth U.D.C.

(c) Nursing in the Home.
The two Queen's Nurses F.I. Crosk and W.M. Kimble, 34 Mansfield Road, appointed by the Baldock and District Nursing Association, carry out the duties of health visitor, school nurse, tuberculosis nurse, and maternity child welfare nurse, in addition to general nursing and midwifery.

(d) Clinics and Treatment Centres.
The Clinic at the Voluntary Maternity and Child Welfare Centre in Pinnocks Lane continues to be held on Tuesday afternoons, from two to four o'clock. Other clinics available are:-
School Dental Clinic, Holford House, Baldock; Tuberculosis Dispensary, Letchworth Hospital (Provided by the County Council); Massage and Orthopaedic Clinic, Broadway Church Room, Letchworth (Provided by the Hertfordshire Branch of the British Red Cross Society), this is now only open once a week.

(e) Hospitals: Public and Voluntary.
Fever Hospital, Hitchin Road, Letchworth, and South Lodge, Baldock, has been opened as an annexe for War Emergency.
This Hospital now serves Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth, Royston and Stevenage Districts, and Hitchin and Welwyn Rural Districts. Up to now the record of this Hospital has been a very good one.

Small-Pox Hospital, Langley, 12 beds.

These appear to be sufficient to accommodate our cases.

Hospitals for tuberculosis, maternity cases and children are provided by the County Council outside your area. Other Hospitals available are the Letchworth Hospital, where patients are admitted from Baldock, the Hitchin Hospital and "Fairfield" Emergency Hospital.

SECTION C:

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF BALDOCK

1. (i) Water.

The water is obtained from The First Garden City Limited's Pumping Stations at Baldock Road and Willian Road. Bacteriological samples are taken every fortnight and have proved most satisfactory.

(ii) Drainage and Sewerage.

An additional six acres of land was obtained for irrigation purposes. Otherwise no change in the system. Consulting Engineers have been instructed to prepare a new scheme for Post-War.

2. Rivers and Streams.

The surface water drainage of the town discharges into the River Ivel. No alteration.

3. (i) Closet accommodation.

One house found to be without water closet, was, under notice, provided with a proper water supply, W.C. and main drainage.

(ii) Public Cleansing.

A mechanised refuse freighter was obtained in 1939 and until 1942 a weekly collection was made. Since this date, owing to shortage of labour, collection is made once per fortnight.

Salvage returns for the district have been particularly good, except for bones. Paper collected during the last four years is 61, 66, 62 and 62 tons respectively.

(iii) Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Houses visited under Public Health Acts	29	6	10	14	19
Factories and Workshops	3	-	4	5	7
Nuisances investigated	14	20	42	41	39
Prevention of Infectious diseases	29	16	15	11	20
Cowsheds, Dairies and Bakehouses	12	10	19	27	29
Butchers and other Shops	29	14	12	26	49
Rat Infestation	6	16	13	20	40
Preliminary Notices served	27	23	30	47	43
Statutory " "	-	-	-	-	-

(iv) Shops and Offices.

There are 81 Shops in the district. All those dealing with food stuffs have been visited during the period, no contraventions found. No inspections of offices carried out.

(v) Camping Site.

(a) One site periodically used by gypsies.
(b) No licence granted.

(vi) Smoke Abatement.

Observations have been taken and six visits to the boilermen have been made to rectify the nuisance. Improvements have been made but fuel supplies cause chief difficulty.

(vii) Swimming Pool (Private).

Samples taken each month by chemist employed by owners of the pool.

(viii) Eradication of Bed Bugs.

The following cases were found and reported. All were disinfested. Two cases required attention for three consecutive years. 1939 - 0 cases. 1940 - 4 cases. 1941 - 6 cases. 1942 - 2 cases. 1943 - 4 cases.

SECTION D:

HOUSING

1. This important subject has lost none of its importance, but owing to the shortage of accommodation and, in latter years, labour, difficulty has been experienced in obtaining the desired standard. Although the Council carried out in 1934 a fairly extensive slum clearance, there are still a number of houses requiring attention, and a list has been prepared for consideration when circumstances permit.

During 1939, 6 houses were completed by private enterprise, and 3 completed since this date.

It is interesting to note of the 1178 dwelling houses that 780 have been erected since the last War, and these include 371 Council houses.

The following sanitary improvements were carried out in houses after a Preliminary Notice was served:-

Re Drainage 4; Roofs and Gutters 16; Doors and Windows 17;
New floors 5; Conversion to W.C. 1; Dampness 8;
Overflows causing dampness 86; Sanitary improvements 18.

One house was found unfit for habitation, and notice served upon the owner prohibiting further use.

Notices outstanding at 31st December, 1943:- Two.

2. Housing Act, 1936. Overcrowding

Local conditions have caused numerous difficulties, but a satisfactory arrangement has been worked out in conjunction with the Billeting Officer, and re-adjustments have been made wherever possible.

The number of houses recorded as overcrowded at the end of 1943 is fifteen, affecting 31 families, and a total number of 132 persons.

SECTION E:

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

(a) Milk Supply.

One farm in the area is licensed for producing, bottling and retailing Tuberculin Tested (Certified) and Accredited Milk. Seven other persons were registered as retail purveyors, two of whom have premises in the district. Close co-operation has been given by the Rural Inspector in whose district the majority of the milk is produced, and from the samples taken in both districts the standard of all milk was found remarkably good.

(b) Meat and other foods.

By reason of War conditions, licensed slaughter-houses in the district are no longer in use. Meat is inspected before coming into the district and has been reasonably good. Nine small lots, total weight 195 lbs. only, have been found unfit and destroyed.

During 1939-43, 148 tins (various sizes) of meats, 294 tins of other food and 314 stone of fish have been inspected and found unfit for human consumption.

(c) Adulteration, etc.

The County Council are the Food and Drugs Authority for the district, the officer being Mr. C.F. Hart.

SECTION F:

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

1. The following list gives the various infectious diseases, and except for the number of chicken-pox and measles during 1940 the record for the district is comparatively good:-

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943
Chicken Pox	10	174	26	16	10
Diphtheria	-	1	2	-	-
Erysipelas	-	1	-	-	-
Meningitis	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	4	6	13	4	5
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	9	1	8	4	19
Tuberculosis	9	4	7	4	1
Whooping Cough	-	3	59	3	12
Measles	-	269	47	3	33
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	-	-	1	1
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	-	-	-	1	-

2. Cancer

There is no evidence of any abnormal prevalence. The 14 deaths in 1939 were somewhat higher than usual; in the other years 9, 4, 4 and 6 respectively were recorded.

3. Tuberculosis

New cases during the period:-

	1939				1940				1941				1942				1943			
	P.		N.P.		P.		N.P.		P.		N.P.		P.		N.P.		P.		N.P.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0- 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1- 5	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
5-15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
15-25	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
25-35	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35-45	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45-55	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
55-65 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	1	3	3	2	2	-	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	1
Deaths																				
5-15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-25	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35-45	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45-55	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55-65 and over	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
	2	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-

4. Immunisation against Diphtheria.

With the helpful co-operation of the Local District Nurses and the School Authorities, the scheme for immunisation has been fairly successful, and on the 31st December, 1943, the number of children in the year immunised were: Under five - 462; Between 5 and 15 - 863. It is estimated that the percentage of children who have been immunised are 60% in the first group and 95% in the second group.

Three cases of Diphtheria have been reported. One girl of 16 in 1940; two children, one aged 1½ and one nine, from the same house, in 1941. None of these had been immunised.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I should like to take this opportunity of thanking my colleagues in the Public Health Department for their help and co-operation.

BERTRAM SUGGIT
Medical Officer of Health.